

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE UPDATE

November 21, 2002

A five-year-old free-roaming elk from Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota has tested positive for CWD. The animal was exhibiting the clinical signs of CWD and was collected for testing. Tests conducted at the Colorado State University Lab confirmed CWD. Source of infection is unknown at this time. In 1997, CWD was found in a captive elk herd adjacent to the park. The Park had recently initiated a \$279,000 multi-year study on deer movement and density and CWD testing. Park Superintendent Linda Stroll committed to coordinating this study and any follow up action on CWD issues with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

The state of Kentucky has banned the import of cervids. The order, signed by the governor of the state, also strictly controls the movement of cervids within the state. The State Fish and Wildlife Department will also not import any additional elk for their recent reintroduction effort. Plans are being made to collect around 1,000 deer during this fall's rifle deer season to test for CWD.

A second captive facility in Alberta, Canada has had an animal test positive for CWD. The latest was a white-tail deer farm. This makes the second captive cervid positive from Alberta. The earlier case was from an elk in that Province. This makes the 42nd farm to test positive in Canada, 40 from Saskatchewan and 2 from Alberta.

The Food and Drug Administration has issued an order prohibiting rendering facilities from taking deer and elk parts from CWD positive deer or deer from known CWD areas. Most renderers have stated that they will cease taking all deer to prohibit an expensive recall of product if a positive shows up in the animals they rendered. This will mainly impact processing plants that dispose of their waste through rendering plants.

An elk calf that had escaped from a game farm in Wisconsin was accidentally shot by a deer hunter. The hunter saw the animal through a patch of fog and shot it, thinking it was a deer. When the mistake was discovered, the hunter contacted authorities. This calf was one of four that had escaped from the game farm after a dog had damaged a fence and the elk escaped. No charges were filed against the hunter.

A second mule deer buck from the area of Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park in Saskatchewan has tested positive for CWD. This makes a total of five positives in free-roaming deer in Saskatchewan. All five have been mule deer bucks. Three have been from the Manito Sandhills area south of Lloydminster and the last two from the area near the park just north of Stewart Valley.

For the first time, Wyoming has confirmed CWD in mule deer west of the Continental Divide. One deer from the Medicine Bow Mountains northeast of Baggs and one from the Sierra Madre south of Saratoga, were confirmed with the disease this week. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department will continue to test heads submitted by hunters from these areas for CWD.